

Red River Roofing & Construction, Inc.

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Choosing a Roofing Contractor

The following are critical criteria used to qualify a professional roofing contractor:

1. Oklahoma Worker's Compensation Insurance

Most "fly by night" or "storm chaser" contractors will try to fool you into believing they carry a valid policy for Oklahoma. The fact is that if they don't carry a valid Worker's Compensation policy in Oklahoma – you are exposed to the liability risk of a work site personal injury lawsuit. Call the state **Worker's Comp Court at (405) 522-8680** to verify coverage. Make the contractor provide a current certificate of coverage prior to starting work.

2. Commercial General Liability Insurance – Minimum 1 Million Policy

What if the roofing crew damages your car, your HVAC equipment, the outside or inside of your home? Or worse, what if they burned down your house? This may seem drastic, but it's all possible. Make sure the contractor is properly insured. Ask the contractor for a certificate of insurance.

3. Roofing Contractor Registration

The State of Oklahoma is now requiring all roofing contractors to be registered with the Oklahoma Construction Industries Board (CIB) to perform work in the state. The Roofing Contractor Registration Act is available on the CIB website: www.ok.gov/cib. Failure to register is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$500. The roofing contractor is also required to display their registration number on each commercial vehicle used for roofing services.

4. Business Location

"Storm Chasers" typically will set up a small temporary office to give the impression that they are a local contractor. They will even have magnetic signs and yard signs stating they are local. A qualified local contractor will have a permanent office sufficient to run a professional business. Before you buy, you may want to visit the contractor's office to verify that this contractor is going to be around to take care of your needs and back up their work. **This is absolutely one of the best methods to determine the legitimacy of a contractor.**

5. Incorporated in Oklahoma

You may check this by contacting the Oklahoma Secretary of State @ 405-521-4138, the cost is \$5.00. If you have Internet access, you may check on the web at www.sos.state.ok.us/, go to "sooneraccess", go to entity search (free), go to "search active", type in the name of the business. **This is one of the best ways to verify the number of years in business and in Oklahoma.**

6. Salesman's ID

Check the driver's license of the salesman to verify he is from the Oklahoma City/Edmond area. Many "Storm Chasers" will purchase the company name of a local company to pass themselves off as "locals", only to leave the small company owner with a bunch of problems and warranties from poor quality workmanship. You may even want to check the license plate of the salesman's truck to see if he and his workers are residing in Oklahoma.

7. Roofing Distributor References

If the distributor's material bill is not paid by the contractor, the distributor will certainly be contacting you to pay the bill. You should ask the contractor for the name and phone number of the distributor to be used so you may verify their credit history. A full list of contractor suppliers is a great source of references. The following is a list of some of the local distributors.

ABC Supply	232-1601	Northwest Roofing Supply	946-0500
Crossroads	528-7663	Spec Supply	235-0166

8. National Roofing Contractor's Association – Member

If a contractor is not a member of it's national association, then it certainly does not put a priority on continuing education, specifications, product changes and legal & code issues. Any member can be looked up on the web at www.nrca.net or verified by calling the NRCA at **(847) 299-9070**.

9. Manufacturer Certifications

Any legitimate contractor will be certified by many manufacturers. The following is a list of area or regional reps for the top 4 roofing shingle manufacturers. Contact them and ask them about any contractor you may be considering for your project.

Jeff Holloway	Owens Corning Roofing Products	(405) 317-7805
James Brooks	GAF/ELK Material Corporation	(405) 205-1715
Blake Asel	Metals USA	(214) 282-5586
Kehl Higgins	CertainTeed Corporation	(405) 826-2994

10. No Roof Loading

As your driving around and looking at all of the roofing jobs going on and shingles being staged on roofs, take note of the companies that pre-load the shingles on the roof top. This is a method to lower the installation labor costs. What the contractor is not telling you is the overwhelming weight being stacked on your ridge row. Adding several thousand pounds of stacked weight to the ridge rafter area is a sure fire way to cause structural defects to the framing and there has also been reported cases of roof collapses. Again, take note of these companies and make sure it doesn't happen to you.

11. Pre-Payment of Work

It is very common for the "fly by night" contractor to ask for a 1/3 or 50% payment when the material is delivered, or sometimes at the time the contract is signed. We have all seen time and time again on television about the bad contractor who took the money and ran, in many cases not even paying for the material with the distributor. On a residential roof project, no payment should be made until the roof is completed.

12. Project Manager

Very few roofing contractors will have a true manager assigned to your project. The fact is that without an assigned trained manager to control the specifications, your roof will not be put on correctly. There are 5-each critical areas of a roof that require the expertise and direction of the manager to be performed correctly.

Fastener placement and proper fastener selection – The fastener location and length of fastener is very specific for composition shingles. Even the ridge takes a different length of nail than the field of the roof. By all means, staples should never be used in any type of roofing. The head is not large enough to not pull through the material and there are no barbs on a staple to grip into the material. Hand nailing is still the best method.

Flashings – proper inspection of existing and replacement / addition as needed

Sealants / Adhesives – Different adhesives & sealants are required for different areas for the roof to perform properly.

Ventilation – Most consumers are unaware that without the proper ventilation to the manufacturers specifications you will not have a valid warranty from the manufacturer.

Manufacturer Specifications – Every roof is different and has different requirements. It is imperative to be trained to the manufacturer's specifications to expect the roof to be put on correctly.

Jobsite Protection – Protection begins and ends with a pre-job interior and exterior inspection by the project manager. Precautions are taken to prevent damage to such areas as landscaping, windows, A/C condensers, and gas vent connections. Protection also means a thorough clean up after completion.

Before you choose a contractor make sure a factory trained project manager is assigned to your job. This person is not a member of the crew – he is a true manager. You should expect the manager to be on the job-site a minimum of 1/3 of the project time.

13. Job Reference

No contractor is going to give you a list of bad references. The key is to get several references and to make sure that you get some of the references on projects that are six months to a year old. Out of state "Storm Chasers" will be easily identified when they cannot produce local references from over six months ago.

14. Better Business Bureau

This is another resource to legitimize a contractor and how long they have been working in the Oklahoma City/Edmond area.

15. Minimum 5 years in Business

Most small businesses fail before they are 5 years old. Roofing is no exception to this statistic, and would even rank as one of the higher categories for failure due to the fact that most people setting up roofing companies have limited business skills.